

THE COMPUTATION OF THE BHAGAVADGITA

BY

PANDIT R. M. SHASTRI,

SĀHITYĀCHĀRYA, KĀVYATĪRTHA, VEDĀNTATĪRTHA, SHĀSTRĪ,

M. A., M. O. I.,

Lecturer in Sanskrit, Allahabad University

TRADITIONAL CLUE

षट् शतानि सविंशानि श्लोकानां प्राह केशव ।
अर्जुन सप्तपञ्चाशत् सप्तषष्टिं तु सञ्जय ॥४॥
वृतराष्ट्र श्लोकमेक गीताया मानमुच्यते ॥

—*Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma-parvan, Adhyāya 43*

“Keśava (Śrī-Bhagavān or Kṛṣṇa) has spoken 620 *ślokas*, Arjuna 57, Sañjaya 67, and Dhṛtarāṣṭra 1 *śloka* (This) is said (to be) the computation of the Gītā ”

These words are found in the Mahābhārata as is borne out by Nīlakantha, the commentator, in his *Bhārata-bhāvadīpa*, and some editions of the great epic contain them in the beginning of *Adhyāya* 43 of the *Bhīṣma-parvan*, the preceding *adhyāya* (i. e. 42nd) being the 18th *adhyāya* of the Bhagavadgītā

There is a difference of opinion on the point whether these lines form part of the genuine Mahābhārata. The famous commentator Nīlakantha remarks (— “गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या इत्यादयः सार्धा पञ्च श्लोका गौडैर्न पठ्यन्ते ।”) that the

Northerners* do not recognise the (first) 5½ verses† (of *Adhyāya* 43) beginning with the words ' *Gītā sugītā kartavyā* '

If we believe Nīlakantha (and there is no reason why we should not), the 43rd *adhyāya* of the *Bhīṣma-parvan* according to the *Northern*† recension of the Mahābhārata goes without the lines in question, and, the *Southern* recension, where they existed in the times of केशव काश्मीरि भट्ट, वरवरमुनि and श्रीधरस्वामी (i.e., in the 14th, 12th and 11th centuries A.C.) could be expected to provide a room for them.

The Bombay and Kumbakonam editions of the Mahābhārata contain the lines (i.e., 5½ stanzas) quoted in our footnote, but as to the preservation of the Mahābhārata text in any typical recension they are far from being satis-

* Pandits of the South Indian communities have been calling Northerners as गौड (cf. the division of Indian Brahmans into 5 गौड and 5 द्राविड sections, the terms गौड and द्राविड in नेष्कम्यसिद्धि ४१४४)

‡ गीता सुगीता कर्तव्या किमन्यै शास्त्रमहग्रहं ।
या स्वयं पद्मनाभस्य सुखपद्माद् विनिस्तुता ॥१॥
सर्वशास्त्रमयी गीता सर्वदेवमयो हरि ।
सर्वतीर्थमयी गङ्गा सर्ववेदमयो मनु ॥२॥
गीता गङ्गा च गायत्री गोविन्देति हृदि स्थिता ।
चतुर्गुणकारसंयुक्ता पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥३॥
पदशतानि सर्वशानि लोकानां प्राह केशव ।
अर्जुन सप्तपञ्चाशत् राक्षसपटिं तु मञ्जय ॥४॥
वृतराष्ट्रं शोकमकं गीताया मानमुच्यते ॥
भारतामृतसर्वस्वगीताया मथितस्य च ॥५॥
सारमुद्धृत्य कृष्णं अर्जुनस्य मुखे तु तम् ॥५॥

—(महाभारत भीष्मपर्वणि ४३तमेऽध्याये)

‡ Dr. Sukthankar in his B O R Institute (Poona) edition of the *Īdiparvan* (Prolegomena, p. LXVII) takes the word गौड used by Nīlkantha, a Mahārāṣṭra Brahman, to refer to the Bengali recension. If this be the correct interpretation, these verses formed part of all Indian MSS. of the Mahābhārata except those representing the Bengali recension.

factory. The Bhandarkar Research Institute, Poona, has commenced the publication of a critical edition of the Mahābhārata. But it will take time to lay its hand on the *Bhīṣma-parvan* for its publication, and till then we shall remain in the dark as to what its editor may be thinking of, or may, in the long run, decide about, the history of the above-mentioned lines containing a clue to the method of counting the number of verses severally assigned to the individual speakers of the Bhagavadgītā. Prof. P. P. S. Sāstrī of Madras has brought out an edition of the Mahābhārata, which, in his own words, being the result of his endeavour to restore the text of the Southern Recension as approximately as may be possible to what it must have been about 1000 A.D. "is "as critical as possible in a handy and popular form." However, to our astonishment, it omits not only the $5\frac{1}{2}$ verses in question but even the entire *adhyāya* containing them. Its *Adhyāya* 40 is *Adhyāya* 18 of the Bhagavadgītā and *Adhyāya* 41 is *Adhyāya* 44 of the Bombay and Kumbakonam editions. We are thus handicapped as to the true history of the $5\frac{1}{2}$ verses that have traditionally preserved to us the valuable information on the important subject of our present enquiry.

However, be the decision on the question of the inclusion of the above-mentioned $5\frac{1}{2}$ stanzas in the original Mahābhārata what it may, one fact is quite evident that they bear testimony to an early attempt of the custodians of the Mahābhārata in the direction of fixing the size and shape of the pure Bhagavadgītā (Divine Song) so as to have left no room for any interpolation therein.

APPARENT DISCREPANCY

Now, the whole of the Gītā is expected to contain $(620 + 57 + 67 + 1 =)$ 745 *ślohas*, according to the traditional figures recorded in the lines noted above. But, as is generally understood, the number of all the verses of the extant

'song Divine' does not exceed 700, as would appear from the following table —

| Adhyāya | Dhrtarāṣṭra | Saṅjaya | Arjuna | Srī Bhagavān | Total |
|---------|-------------|---|---|---|-------|
| I | 1 | 19½ (ie 2 20½) 4½ („ 24-27½) 1 („ 47) | 2½ (ie 20½ 23) 18½ („ 27½ 46) | | 47 |
| II | | 1 (ie No 1) 2 (9 10) | 5 (ie 4 8) 1 („ 54) | 2 (ie, 2 3) 48 (11-58) 18 (55-72) | 72 |
| III | | | 2 (ie, 1-2) 1 („ No 36) | 33 (ie 3-35) 7 (87 43) | 43 |
| IV | | | 1 (ie, No 4) | 3 (ie 1-3) 38 („ 5 42) | 42 |
| V | | | 1 (ie, No 1) | 28 (ie, 2 9) | 39 |
| VI | | | 2 (ie, 33-34) 3 (57 39) | 32 (ie 1-32) 2 (35-36) 8 („ 40 47) | 47 |
| VII | | | | 30 (ie 1 30) | 30 |
| VIII | | | 2 (ie, 1-2) | 26 (ie, 3-28) | 28 |
| IX | | | | 34 (ie 1-34) | 34 |
| X | | | 7 (ie, 12 18) | 11 (ie 1-11) 24 („ 19 42) | 42 |
| XI | | 6 (ie, 9 14) 1 („ No 35) 1 („ „ 50) | 4 (ie, 1 4) 17 („ 15-31) 11 („ 36-46) 1 („ No 51) | 4 (ie, 5-8) 5 („ 32 34) 3 („ 47-49) 4 („ 52-55) | 55 |
| XII | | | 1 (ie, No 1) | 19 (ie, 2-20) | 20 |
| XIII* | | | * | 34 (ie, 1 34) | 34 |
| XIV | | | 1 (ie, No 21) | 20 (ie, 1-20) 6 („ 22 27) | 27 |
| XV | | | | 20 (ie, 1-20) | 20 |
| XVI | | | | 24 (ie 1-24) | 24 |
| XVII | | | 1 (ie, No 1) | 27 (ie, 2 28) | 28 |
| XVIII | | 5 (ie, 74-78) | 1 (ie, No 1) 1 („ „ 78) | 71 (ie, 2-72) | 78 |
| Total | 1 | 41 | 84 | 574 | 700* |

* Śrī Sankarācārya and other *Bhāṣyakāra*, are not aware of the existence of the verse "प्रकृति पुरुष चैव क्षेत्र क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च । एतद्वदितुमिच्छामि

Comparing this result with the figures known from the *Bhīṣma-parvan*, as follows

| | Dhrtarāṣṭra | Sanjaya | Arjuna | Śrī Bhagavān | Total |
|---------------------|-------------|---------|--------|--------------|-------|
| Result of the table | 1 | 41 | 84 | 574 | 700 |
| Old tradition | 1 | 67 | 57 | 620 | 746 |

we at once notice that, except for the only figure (of one verse) for Dhrtarāṣṭra, which is the same, in both places, there is a *two-fold discrepancy* discernible between the figures for other speakers. For, while we notice a decreasing proportion in the number of verses of Sanjaya, Śrī-Bhagavān and the total, the number of Arjuna's verses largely increases in the result of our tabular calculation in comparison with the figures recorded in *Adhyāya* 43 of the *Bhīṣma-parvan*. The question is

‘*How to account for this two-fold discrepancy?*’

Should we discard the ancient tradition as worthless in view of the actual figures obtained from our own calculation pointing out decrease on one side and increase on the other? Or, can we get at the method employed or principles involved in the ancient computation and remove the present difference? The writer of these lines emphatically opines that until a thorough examination and patient study pursued on strictly scientific lines have proved its futility or hollowness, no ancient heritage has to be finally rejected. And in the present case the word *śloka* used in the lines in

ज्ञानं श्रेयं च केशव ॥” which is put in the mouth of Arjuna at the very outset of *Adhyāya* XIII in some popular editions of the *Gītā*. It is also noteworthy that the total number of the *Gītā* verses is said, by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya and others, to be exactly 700

question supplies us with the clue to the traditional or ancient method of the computation of the Bhagavadgītā

TWO PRINCIPLES OF THE ANCIENT COMPUTATION

The most fundamental principle generally followed in measuring the length of a Sanskrit work in prose or verse or both is that of counting together all its syllables and, after dividing them by 32 (the number of syllables or *akṣaras* contained in an *Anuṣṭubh* verse technically known as a *śloka*) of taking the quotient to represent the number of *ślokas* popularly called the *Gānthā-sankhyā* of that particular work. This is how the Mahābhārata (containing also prose portions) just like the whole Vedic literature under its three branches (Kāndas) of *Karma Upāsanā* and *Jñāna* (including a larger number of works in prose than poetry) is to be measured in 100 000 *ślokas*. The Gītā is composed of verses in either *Anuṣṭubh* or *Tristubh* metre the former unit including 32 and the latter generally 44 syllables or *akṣaras* and by the application of the present principle, the keynote of the traditional method of computing the ancient works if, while counting together all the verses in the Gītā, we evaluate the *Tristubh* verses by the measure of the *Anuṣṭubh* metre, we may expect ourselves to arrive at a figure different from 700 that may take us nearer to the traditional figure of 745. The number of the *ślokas* of the whole work as well as of those assigned to different speakers is thus sure to increase in proportion to the surplus of the *Tristubh* stanzas weighed in *Anuṣṭubh*. This may remove the discrepancy on the side of decrease in the number of verses we obtained for Sañjaya (*viz* 41) Śrī-Bhagavān (574) and the total (700), in the result of our tabular calculation as compared to the traditional figures of 67, 620 and 745 respectively.

But how to obviate the difficulty about the number of Arjuna's verses which instead of thus decreasing has

actually increased from 57 of the traditional record to 84 of our tabular result? An insight into the nature of the *Śrī-Kṛṣṇārjuna-samvāda* or the dialogue proper between Śrī-Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna yields another principle to determine the exact verses to be assigned to Arjuna, the valuation whereof may remove the discrepancy on this score too. We see that Arjuna's speeches which are generally short are marked by the inquisitiveness of a pupil and amount to a request or a question, on his part to which Śrī-Bhagavān responds in apt terms typical of a teacher. The only two *adhyāyas* containing long speeches from Arjuna are I and XI. In *Adhyāya I*, *ślokas* 27½—46, amounting to Arjuna's grief (*śoka*) and delusion (*moha*) the very seed of the message of Śrī-Bhagavān we see nothing foreign added to Arjuna's native capacity. He speaks in the same strain once again, though briefly in *Adhyāya II*, verses 4—8. In *Adhyāya XI*, *ślokas* 1—4, he, showing his satisfaction with the secret knowledge imparted to him by Śrī-Bhagavān requests the latter to reveal to him His highest form. Śrī-Bhagavān has however, complied with this request of Arjuna, His greatest devotee and friend, and virtually blesses him with divine vision, since that form of His was beyond the scope of the devotee's human eye. Now as a result of this divine vision verses 15—31 and 36—46 essentially of the nature of a *stuti* do not come under the average part of Arjuna in the dialogue form and should not be credited to him. So, if we exclude these 28 verses, all in *Tristubh* metre all other verses bearing the stamp of Arjuna's speech in the Gītā may possibly come to the value of 57 *ślokas*.

But, again, to whose speeches are these 28 verses to be added if not to Arjuna's? We know that but for the Divine Eye lent for the time being by the Divine Lord to Arjuna, His ideal worshipper and devotee, the latter would have remained incapable of having a glimpse of the

Viśva-rūpa (Universal Form) and eulogizing the same. Hence, what comes out from his lips, in that mood of Divine vision, is really due to Śrī-Bhagavān, to whom it would be, therefore, reasonable to associate it. So, verses 15—31, and 36—46 of *Adhyāya* XI should form part of the number of *śloka*s assigned to Śrī-Bhagavān.

With the application of these two principles let us now work out a fresh computation as is shown by the following table —

| Adhyāya | Dharmasūtra | | Śaṅkara | | Arjuna | | Śrī-Bhagavān | | Total |
|---------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|-----------|
| | Verse No | Syllables | V Nos | S | V N | S | V N | S | Syllables |
| I | (1) | 32 | (2 20*) (24 27*) (47) | 824 144 32 | (20)-23) (27 46) | 80 592 | | | 1504 |
| II | | | (1) (9 10) | 32 64 | (4) (5) (6) (7-8) (54) | 32 44 46 88 82 | (2 3) (11 19) (20) (21) (22) (23 28) (29) (30 53) (55 60) (70) 71 72 | 64 288 44 82 44 192 45 768 480 44 64 | 2408 |
| III | | | | | (1 2) (36) | 64 32 | (3-35) (37 43) | 1056 224 | 1376 |
| IV | | | | | (4) | 32 | (1 3) (5-42) | 96 1216 | 1344 |
| V | | | | | (1) | 32 | (2 29) | 896 | 928 |
| VI | | | | | (33 34) (37-39) | 64 96 | (1 32) (35 36) (40-47) | 1024 64 256 | 1504 |
| VII | | | | | | | (1 30) | 960 | 960 |
| VIII | | | | | (1-2) | 64 | (3 8) (9) (10) (11) (12-27) (28) | 192 44 45 44 512 44 | 945 |

| Adhyāya | Dhṛtarāṣṭra | | Sanjaya | | Arjuna | | Śrī Bhagavān | | Total |
|--|-------------|------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------|--|---|--|
| | Verse No | Syllables | V | Nos | S | V | N | S | Syllables |
| IX | | | | | | | | (1-19) (20-21) (22-84) | 608 8 416 1112 |
| X | | | | | | (12-18) | 224 | (1-11) (19-42) | 352 768 1344 |
| XI | | | (9-14) (45) (50) | 192 44 44 | (1-4) (51) | 120 32 | (1-8) (25-37) (32-34) (36-37) (47-49) (52-55) | 128 748 132 484 132 128 2192 | |
| XII | | | | | | (1) | 32 | (2-20) | 608 640 |
| XIII | | | | | | | | (1-34) | 1088 1088 |
| XIV | | | | | | (21) | 32 | (1-20) (23-27) | 640 192 864 |
| XV | | | | | | | | (1) (2) (3) (4-5) (6-14) (15) (16-20) | 12 44 45 88 288 44 160 701 |
| XVI | | | | | | | | (1-24) | 768 768 |
| XVII | | | | | | (1) | 32 | (2-28) | 864 896 |
| XVIII | | | (74-78) | 180 | (1) (78) | 32 32 | (2-72) | 2272 | 2496 |
| Total No of syllables | | 32 | | | 1886 | | 1848 | | 19855 28060 |
| Valuation in stokas (of 89 syllables each) | | 1 stoka | | | 41 stokas 24 syllables | | 57 stokas 19 syllables | | 620 stokas 13 syllables 720 stokas 26 syll |

* In the above table, the asterisks indicate the *Tristubh* metre and the italicized figures of Adhyāya XI stand for Arjuna's speeches counted as Śrī-Bhagavat's

Thus we get one *śloka* for Dhṛtaśṛṅgā, 57 *ślokas* and 19 *akṣaras* for Arjuna, and 620 *ślokas* and 15 *akṣaras* for Śrī-Bhagavān, not differing much from the figures of 1 (one), 57 and 620 *ślokas* assigned respectively to the very same speakers by the Mahābhārata tradition. Evidently, the ancients, in their computation of the Gītā did not take the fraction of a *śloka* into consideration, and so we have to take only full *ślokas* of the total number for Arjuna and Śrī-Bhagavān [as well as of the grand total] into our account and leave out the excess of *akṣaras* (syllables) in these cases. If we were to believe that Arjuna has uttered one *śloka* in the beginning of *Adhyāya* XIII and the latter contains 35 instead of 34 *ślokas*, the whole number of *ślokas* for Arjuna would exceed the limit, which is not desirable. Hence *Adhyāya* XIII contains only 34 *ślokas*, all for Śrī-Bhagavān, and no *śloka* for Arjuna.

We are still confronted by a problem awaiting its solution, *viz.*, that the number for Sañjaya and consequently the grand total falls short by about 25 *ślokas*, in spite of our discovery and application of special principles. How to get out of this difficulty? We have to meet this question with something which must form part of the Gītā text itself.

A THIRD PRINCIPLE

So far, we have counted every syllable (*akṣara*) of all the verses of the Bhagavadgītā, but we have not touched the colophons in prose marking the termination of the individual *adhyāyas* or subdivisions of that book. The colophons in a Sanskrit work are always considered to be its genuinely component parts unless a proof to the contrary shows them to be otherwise. In the light of this principle the prose colophons are to be treated as a legitimate part of the Gītā like verses themselves.

But to whom are the colophons of the Divine Discourse to be assigned? There are only 4 persons to whom the whole Gītā is due. Its main subject forms a dialogue between Kesava and Arjuna, and the colophons are quite apart therefrom. Dhrtarāstra plays no other part than that of putting a question, at the very outset, to Sañjaya who, in reply to it, reproduces the whole dialogue as it took place between Arjuna and Bhagavān Śrī-Kṛṣṇa with his own remarks wherever there is an occasion or a necessity for them to be introduced. Thus, the whole of the Gītā, in the shape it has come down to us, is to be understood to have been told by one person, *i.e.*, Sañjaya (to Dhrtarāstra). The colophons should, therefore, form an indispensable part of Sañjaya's speech. The computation of these colophons is as follows —

The words “इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे” amounting to 31 syllables are common to all the 18 colophons marking the terminations of the 18 *adhyāyas* and so for these words of 31 syllables repeated 18 times, we get $31 \times 18 = 558$ syllables. The remaining portions of the colophons recording the names of the individual *adhyāyas* are read differently in all the 18 places. But, again, there is a difficulty in the way of our counting their syllables inasmuch as, in a number of cases, the colophon for or the name of one and the same *adhyāya* offers different readings in different books of the Śrīmad-Bhagavadgītā. The readings found in the Mahābhārata itself, of which the *Bhagavadgītā-parvan* (4 *adhyāyas* 13—42) forms a sub-*parvan* of the *Bhīṣma-parvan*, may however, be taken as the standard ones. The latest edition of the Mahābhārata (Southern Recension) by Prof. P. P. S. Śāstrī of the Presidency College, Madras, does not contain the names of the *adhyāyas* of the Bhagavadgītā in the

* *Adhyāya* XVIII, *śloka*s 74 and 76

colophons The two Calcutta editions are not easily available But it is a matter of great satisfaction that the other two, *z e*, Ganpat Kisanji (Bombay) and Madhva Vilās Book Depot (Kumbakonam), editions (except in one case of the colophon to *Adhyāya* XI) give identical readings, the computation whereof would be as follows —

| Adhyāya No | The latter parts of colophons | Valuation in syllables |
|---|---|------------------------|
| I | —सर्जुनविषादयोगो नाम प्रथमोऽध्याय | 14 |
| II | माङ्गल्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्याय | 11 |
| III | कर्मयोगो नाम तृतीयोऽध्याय | 11 |
| IV | यज्ञविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्थोऽध्याय | 14 |
| V | * संन्यासयोगो नाम पञ्चमोऽध्याय | 12 |
| VI | अध्यात्मयोगो नाम षष्ठोऽध्याय | 11 |
| VII | ज्ञानयोगो नाम सप्तमोऽध्याय | 11 |
| VIII | † तारकब्रह्मयोगो नामाष्टमोऽध्याय | 13 |
| IX | राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगो नाम नवमोऽध्याय | 17 |
| X | विभूतियोगो नाम दशमोऽध्याय | 12 |
| XI | ‡ विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो नामैकादशोऽध्याय | 16 |
| XII | भक्तियोगो नाम द्वादशोऽध्याय | 11 |
| XIII | क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगो नाम त्रयोदशोऽध्याय | 18 |
| XIV | गुणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्दशोऽध्याय | 17 |
| XV | पुरुषोत्तमयोगो नाम पञ्चदशोऽध्याय | 15 |
| XVI | देवासुरमर्त्यद्विविभागयोगो नाम षोडशोऽध्याय | 18 |
| XVII | श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगो नाम सप्तदशोऽध्याय | 17 |
| XVIII | संन्यासयोगो नामाष्टादशोऽध्याय | 12 |
| Total number of syllables for these parts | | 270 |

* Most of the Gītā books read 'कर्मसंन्यास-योगा,' which should be accepted as the correct name for *Adhyāya* V

† Although the names 'ब्रह्माक्षरनिर्देशो' and 'महापुरुषयोगो' found in some Gītā books would also give the same number of syllables as 'तारकाब्रह्मयोगा', yet we have followed the Mahābhārata in the nomenclature of the Gītā colophons

‡ The present reading is found in the Kumbakonam edition The Bombay and Calcutta editions read only 'विश्वरूपदर्शन नाम' omitting the word योगो before 'नाम' If the latter reading be adopted,

It is strange that both the Bombay and Kumbakonam editions give one and the same name for the 5th as well as the 18th *adhyāya* *Samnyāsa-yoga* should, however be accepted as the name for the 18th *adhyāya* only, while *karma-samnyāsa-yoga* as met with in majority of Gītā books, should be the name of the 5th *adhyāya*. This change would give us 2 syllables more against the 5th *adhyāya*. But the total of 250 may remain unchanged for the fact that the Bombay and Calcutta editions read only 'विश्वरूपदर्शन' in place of 'विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो' of the Kumbakonam edition and the former reading would give us 2 syllables less against the 11th *adhyāya*.

Thus all the 18 colophons in their entirety add (558 + 250, or) 808 syllables or $808/32 = 25\frac{8}{2}$ *ślokas* more to the number of *ślokas* proper ($41\frac{24}{2}$) for Sañjaya. By the addition of both these figures ($41\frac{24}{2} + 25\frac{8}{2}$) we obtain exactly 67, which is the number of *ślokas* said to have belonged to Sañjaya according to the information available in the Mahābhārata itself.

RESULT

Thus, the respective figures of 1, 67, $57\frac{10}{2}$ and $620\frac{16}{2}$ for Dhṛtarāstra, Sañjaya, Arjuna and Keśava arrived at in the light of the special principles elucidated above, tally [almost] exactly with the numbers (1, 67, 57 and 620) of *ślokas* credited to these four characters of the Bhagavad-gītā in *Adhyāya* 43 of the *Bhīṣma-parvan*. The *grantha-sankhyā* of the Gītā, thus obtained, would come to $746\frac{2}{2}$ (our previous total of $720\frac{2}{2}$ + colophons of $25\frac{8}{2}$) *ślokas*. But as, according to our previous decision, the excess of

it would give us only 14 syllables against the eleventh *adhyāya*. This loss of 2 syllables can well be compensated by the addition of the word 'कर्म' (yielding the same number) before the name for the fifth *adhyāya*.

syllables in the separate figures for the speakers has to be left out, the *grantha-saṅkhyā* of the whole Gītā should be taken to remain $[1 + 67 + 57 + 620 =]$ 745 *ślokas* and not exceed this number by 19 + 15 or 26 + 8 syllables ($= 1 \frac{2}{2}$ *śloka*). This is also because in view of the fact that in the Gītā we have the *Tristubh* metre three (II 29, VIII 10, and XV 3) of 45 and once (II 6) even of 46 against 44 syllables, its normal size, and similarly the *Anuṣṭubh* metre once (XI 1) of 33 instead of 32 syllables, the deduction of these six irregular syllables would give us, over and above 745 *ślokas*, only 28 syllables, which do not amount to a *śloka* and are, therefore to be left out.

IMPORTANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The above investigation is not to be considered as useless like the examination of a crow's teeth (काकदन्तपरीक्षावत्). It is important for the following points —

(1) The ancient tradition of the computation of the whole of the Gītā as recorded in the Mahābhārata (*Bhīṣma-parvan*, *Adhyāya* 43), has preserved the textual purity of the Bhagavadgītā against all interpolations.

(2) The 13th *adhyāya*, contains only 34 *ślokas*, all from Śrī-Bhagavān (Kṛṣṇa or Śrī-Kṛṣṇa), and the verse

“प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च ।

एतद् वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव ॥”

credited to Arjuna in popular editions, forms no part of the original Bhagavadgītā and did not exist in the times of its earlier commentators, and, consequently, they could not be expected to write anything regarding it.

(3) The colophons at the end of the *adhyāyas* form an integral part of the original Bhagavadgītā and must, as such, be included in its *pāṭha*. Their text also can well

might be fixed in the light of the fact that the traditional reading has to afford 808 syllables in all.

(4) As according to the Mahābhārata record the computation of the Gītā including, as shown above, both the verses and the prose colophons ought not to exceed 745 *ślokas* in all the small sentences like धृतराष्ट्र उवाच, सञ्जय उवाच, अर्जुन उवाच, श्रीभगवानुवाच, repeatedly met with in the work and used for introducing verses of those various speakers are decidedly no indispensable part of Sañjaya's narration of the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna before Dhṛtarāṣṭra in reply to the latter's question and could not possibly fall under the four headings of the settled computation of the Gītā, and any one who excludes them in course of his *Pāṭha* (पाठ, daily recitation) does nothing seriously wrong. These introductory sentences too, may be treated as regular part of the Gītā, but in that case, they are to be assigned to the author of the Mahābhārata and certainly not to the four speakers named above. The present writer has also worked the *adhyāya* wise computation of all such sentences which put together, comes to more than 10 *ślokas* and their addition to any one or all the four headings of the computation of the Gītā would not only go without justification but also mean a serious blow to the figures of the established computation of the work in question.

(5) Whenever we are to calculate the *grantha-sankhyā* or *ślokas* of a work the word *śloka* is generally to be taken as an equivalent of an *Anuṣṭubh* verse or 32 syllables. This explains the fact that even according to [the *Anuśikṣā-mānī-kādhyaṃya* of] the Mahābhārata itself, the actual number of its verses comes to a little more than 84,000 and was almost the same in Nīlakantha's time (17th century), as is clear from its Bombay and Calcutta editions. And, consequently, modern editors or critics of the Mahābhārata

are mistaken in their attempt or anxiety to count in it 100,000 'verses' instead of 'ślokas' of the traditional sense of *grantha-sankhyā* ("लक्ष तु वेदाश्चत्वारो लक्ष भारतमेव च")

(6) The speech of Arjuna in the form of a *stuti* due to the Divine Vision granted him by Śrī-Bhagavān is to be treated as part of the Divine Lord's speech

(7) The original Bhagavadgītā never existed in (any form) less than the present 700 verses and it was in this very shape and size that this monumental discourse was included in the *Bhīṣma-parvan* of the Mahābhārata. This last point has been a subject of great controversy and involves a discussion as to whether the original Mahābhārata was a work in a hundred thousand (100,000) ślokas. To Prof. P. P. S. Śāstrī is due the credit of settling this point in his introduction to Parts I and II of the *Ādi-parvan*, and accordingly, when the original Mahābhārata itself, amounting to 100,000 ślokas, is proved to contain the present Gītā of 18 *adhyāyas*, the controversy regarding the latter's size should also be set at rest.